

Message Text

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TAGS: FAO, OCON

SUBJ: FIRST SESSION OF WORKING PARTY ON FAO COUNCIL AND
COMMITTEES, DEVELOPMENTS MARCH 3-4

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REFS: (A) ROME 3439 (B) ROME 3459

SUMMARY. FIRST SESSION OF WORKING PARTY ON FAO COUNCIL AND
COMMITTEES HAS FOCUSSED MAINLY ON DEVELOPING LIST OF ITEMS TO
BE CONSIDERED. CHAIRMAN PRESENTED WIDE-RANGING QUESTIONS ON
THIS SUBJECT, AND FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL MADE STATEMENT TO WORKING
PARTY DEALING MAINLY WITH FAO RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZA-
TIONS. WORKING PARTY DECIDED, HOWEVER, TO BEGIN WITH INTER-
NAL ITEMS IN FOREFRONT OF ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE: REPRESENTATION
IN AND RELATIONSHIPS AMONG COUNCIL AND ITS PROGRAM, FINANCE,
AND CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS COMMITTEES. SESSION WAS
ALMOST CONCLUDED MORNING OF MARCH 4 BUT NEW IDEAS RAISED
CALL FOR CONTINUATION MORNING OF MARCH 5, AFTER REGIONAL
MEETINGS AFTERNOON MARCH 4. WE WILL REPORT FINAL ACTIVITIES
AND TEXT OF LIST OF ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IMMEDIATELY. WORKING
PARTY HAS DECIDED TO HOLD ANOTHER PROCEDURAL MEETING MAY 17 OR
17-18, AND TO HOLD ITS FIRST SUBSTANTIVE SESSION AFTER FAO
COUNCIL SESSION IN JULY.

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1. OPENING OF SESSION. WORKING PARTY BEGAN WORK MARCH 3 WITH 12 COUNTRIES ATTENDING: BRAZIL (ILL), LEBANON, AND SAUDI ARABIA (AT PARIS CONFERENCE) WERE ABSENT. FRANCE AND GUINEA WERE SELECTED AS EQUAL VICE-CHAIRMEN. VELAY WILL SERVE FOR FRANCE BUT INDIVIDUAL HAS NOT BEEN SPECIFIED FOR GUINEA. (CHARGE D'AFFAIRES AD ITERIM K. FIMAN-KOBA, SOON TO BE AMBASSADOR TO ITALY, IS HEADING DELEGATION, CAMARA IS OUT OF TOWN, AND FOFANI IS ATTENDING AS ASSISTANT.)

2. FAO DIRECTOR GENERAL SAOUMA'S VIEWS WERE PRESENTED AT OUTSET. COPIES OF HIS STATEMENT TO UN RESTRUCTURING COMMITTEE WERE DISTRIBUTED AND HE PERSONALLY ADDRESSED WORKING PARTY IMMEDIATELY AFTER OPENING REMARKS OF CHAIRMAN. SAOUMA URGED THAT BEFORE CHANGES WERE PROPOSED, IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO SEE IF NEEDS COULD NOT BE MET WITHIN EXISTING RULES. MAIN PART OF HIS STATEMENT DEALT WITH HIS CONCERN ABOUT PROLIFERATING INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES AND FAO CONFERENCE DIRECTIVE TO HIM TO REPORT ON ARRANGEMENTS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. HE ASSERTED FAO'S CENTRAL ROLE AS UN SPECIALIZED AGENCY IN FOOD-AGRICULTURE FIELD, AND SAID IT WAS PART OF UN SUB-SYSTEM WHICH HE LIKENED TO SOLAR SYSTEM WITH FAO AS SUN AND WORLD FOOD PROGRAM, WORLD FOOD COUNCIL, AND IN FUTURE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT GRAVITATING AROUND IT. HE MENTIONED HIS DISCUSSIONS OF PROBLEM WITH UN SYG AND WITH GROUP 77, WEO, LATIN AMERICAN, SOCIALIST BLOC, ARAB, AND AFRICAN GROUPS AT UN HEADQUARTERS. HE OFFERED TO DISCUSS WORKING PARTY'S PROBLEMS UPON REQUEST.

3. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF TERMS OF REFERENCE. MORNING AND FIRST PART OF AFTERNOON WERE SPENT IN DISCUSSION BY ALL DELEGATIONS OF TERMS OF REFERENCE, BASED ON CHAIRMAN'S INFORMAL QUESTIONS (REFTEL A). JAPAN OPENED BY ADVOCATING STRICT INTERPRETATION OF TERMS OF REFERENCE, DEALING ONLY WITH FAO COUNCIL AND PROGRAM, FINANCE, AND CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS COMMITTEES. ALGERIA FAVORED BROADENING TERMS OF REFERENCE. U.S. SUGGESTED DEALING WITH OTHER COMMITTEES AND RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ONLY TO EXTENT NECESSARY IN BASIC TERMS OF REFERENCE, LEAVING FIRST ACTION ON THOSE MATTERS TO FAO DIRECTOR GENERAL IN HIS REPORT TO JULY COUNCIL. MEXICO RAISED NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER, CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES, AND RELATED UNGA RESOLUTIONS AS GUIDELINES, AND PARSED FAO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DIRECTOR GENERAL'S STATEMENT TO UN RESTRUCTURING COMMITTEE AS FURTHER BASIS FOR ACTION. FRANCE SUGGESTED COMPROMISE OF BEGINNING WITH QTE INTERNAL UNQTE MATTERS AND LATER CONSIDERING QTE EXTERNAL UNQTE. ZAMBIA, EMPHASIZING AS DID ALMOST ALL OTHER DELEGATIONS THAT STATEMENT WAS NOT BASED ON GOVERNMENT INSTRUCTIONS, SPOKE FOR MORE AFRICAN SEATS IN COUNCIL, IN KEEPING WITH INCREASE IN AFRICAN MEMBERSHIP.

4. QUESTIONNAIRE ISSUE. IN OPENING STATEMENTS, JAPAN SUGGESTED QUESTIONNAIRE TO ALL MEMBER GOVERNMENTS, AS IN 1973. CZECHOSLOVAKIA OPPOSED ON GROUNDS THAT UN EXPERIENCE HAD SHOWN THIS REQUIRED MUCH WORK AND YIELDED LITTLE RESULT. SRI LANKA FAVORED QUESTIONNAIRE, BUT POINTED OUT IT MUST BE CAREFULLY PHRASED, AND SUGGESTED CHAIRMAN UNDERTAKE IT. JAPAN SPOKE SECOND TIME, TO CLARIFY IT DID NOT ADVOCATE ANY IMMEDIATE TRANSMISSION OF QUESTIONNAIRE. CHAIRMAN CALLED ON SECRETARY (DE CAPRONA) WHO REPORTED THAT 1973 QUESTIONNAIRE OF THREE QUESTIONS PRODUCED REPLIES FROM ONLY 61 COUNTRIES (DOCUMENT CLWP/I/6) UP TO MONTH AND HALF AFTER DEADLINE. HE ALSO SUGGESTED GREAT CARE IN PHRASING QUESTIONNAIRE. FRANCE COMMENTED THAT QUESTIONNAIRE WAS SECONDARY QUESTION, AND PART OF MORE GENERAL QUESTION ABOUT PROCEDURES FOR NON-MEMBERS OF WORKING PARTY TO PRESENT THEIR VIEWS. (CHAIRMAN HAD SUGGESTED AT OUTSET THAT NON-MEMBERS PRESENT VIEWS THROUGH REGIONAL MEMBERS, BUT IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES WITH APPROVAL OF WORKING PARTY BEING PERMITTED TO PRESENT VIEWS ORALLY. SRI LANKA COMMENTED THAT NON-MEMBERS SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO PRESENT VIEWS TO CHAIRMAN.) CHAIRMAN RULED THAT QUESTIONNAIRE WOULD BE HELD IN ABEYANCE, AND UNDER URGING OF MEXICO, ASKED FOR SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS ON AGENDA.

5. COUNTRIES COMMENTS ON ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION. IN RESPONSE TO CHAIRMAN'S REQUEST, FRANCE OPENED BY SUGGESTING COMPOSITION OF FAO COUNCIL, AND REPRESENTATION OF REGIONS, OR REFERRING TO CZECH EARLIER COMMENTS, OF TRENDS OR TENDENCIES. SRI LANKA SECONDED COMPOSITION SUGGESTION, AND ADDED PROPOSAL OF NATIONAL AS OPPOSED TO PERSONAL CAPACITY OF MEMBERSHIP OF PROGRAM AND FINANCE COMMITTEES -- LATTER PROPOSAL LATER SECONDED BY MEXICO.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA PROPOSED ROLE OF OBSERVERS IN COUNCIL, RELATIONS OF COUNCIL WITH SUBSIDIARY BODIES, AND DELEGATION OF POWERS BY COUNCIL. MEXICO SUGGESTED ITEM OF STRENGTHENING CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS COMMITTEE AND ENLARGING ITS MEMBERSHIP. MEXICO AND INDIA SUGGESTED REMODELING FAO COMMODITY PROCEDURES TO CONFORM WITH THOSE OF UNCTAD. JAPAN SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEM ON DEFINING INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROGRAM AND FINANCE COMMITTEES. JAPAN ALSO SUGGESTED ITEM ON CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP IN KEY COMMITTEES -- EXPORT AND IMPORT OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES, POPULATION, GNP, AND CONTRIBUTION TO FAO BUDGET (SEE REF B FOR JAPANESE GOVERNMENT POSITION.)

6. REPORT AND SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS. SECOND DAY OPENED WITH DISTRIBUTION OF LIST OF MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED, PREPARED BY CHAIRMAN, AND READING OF HIS BRIEF REPORT ON THIS FIRST EXPLORATORY SESSION. DISCUSSION TURNED TO FIXING OF SCHEDULE OF FUTURE SESSIONS. IN RECOGNITION OF NEED TO FIRM UP LIST OF ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED WELL BEFORE SUMMER SESSION, IT WAS DECIDED TO HOLD ANOTHER SESSION MAY 17 OR 17-18, IMMEDIATELY BEFORE PROGRAM AND FINANCE COMMITTEES. FIRST SUBSTANTIVE SESSION IS TO BE HELD AFTER FAO COUNCIL MEETING IN JULY.

7. FURTHER IDEAS ON LIST OF ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION. HOPES FOR ENDING THIS SESSION AT NOON MARCH 4 WENT AGLIMMERING WHEN TOO MANY NEW IDEAS WERE RAISED ON LIST OF TOPICS TO BE CONSIDERED.

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CHAIRMAN HAD DRAFTED LIST, TO WHICH NO ONE TOOK MUCH EXCEPTION, BUT ADDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF DIFFERENT APPROACHES PROVED TOO MUCH TO HANDLE IN MORNING MEETING. BRAZILIAN REPRESENTATIVE RECOVERED FROM ILLNESS AND ATTENDED, MAKING SUGGESTIONS THAT DOCUMENTATION, DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURES, SECRETARIAT SUPPORT, AND NATURE AS WELL AS PERIODICITY OF COUNCIL MEETINGS BE CONSIDERED. SRI LANKA ALSO MENTIONED SECRETARIAT SUPPORT. CZECHOSLOVAKIA WANTED TO INCLUDE POSSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT NOMINATION OF PERSONAL-CAPACITY CANDIDATES FOR PROGRAM AND FINANCE COMMITTEES, AND ROLE OF NON-MEMBER GOVERNMENTS AND SUB-REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN FAO MEETINGS. SRI LANKA RAISED COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS, WHICH CHAIRMAN HAD NOT INCLUDED. JAPAN SECONDED INCLUDING THIS COMMITTEE, AND ALGERIA SAID IT SHOULD BE GIVEN PARTICULAR ATTENTION INASMUCH AS ALGERIA INTENDS TO MAKE BROAD PROPOSALS FOR CHANGING IT, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO DELEGATING TO IT MANY FUNCTIONS NOW PERFORMED BY COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE. SWEDEN CALLED FOR ATTENTION TO IMPROVING TECHNICAL QUALITY OF FAO'S

COMMITTEE MEETINGS. FRANCE THEN MADE GENERAL PROPOSAL THAT LIST OF ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED BE CAST ALONG COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LINES, GROUPING THEM UNDER THREE HEADINGS: A) REPRESENTATION, B) ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS, AND C) METHODS OF WORK.

8. REMAINING BUSINESS. PERCEIVING THAT WORK COULD NOT BE CONCLUDED IN MORNING MEETING, CHAIRMAN ADJOURNED UNTIL MORNING MARCH 8, TO PERMIT EUROPE AND ASIA REGIONAL GROUPINGS, AND SUCH OTHERS AS WISHED, TO HOLD MEETINGS AFTERNOON MARCH 4. MARCH 5 MEETING WILL DEAL WITH REVISED LIST OF ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION, AND SESSION IS EXPECTED TO TERMINATE WELL BEFORE NOON. WE WILL REPORT IMMEDIATELY UPON FINAL DEVELOPMENTS, AND TRANSMIT LIST OF ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED BY WORKING PARTY IN SUMMER SESSION. VOLPE

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